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DE RUEHAA #0741 1940623  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 130623Z JUL 06  
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7565  
INFO RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 2561  
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT 4965  
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 1664  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 1277  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1181  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0367  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC//DHO-2/REA/NMJIC-J2//  
RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHINGTON DC//J5/RUE//  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCJ2/HSE/CCJ5//

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 000741

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SENSITIVE

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FOR SCA/CEN  
ANKARA FOR AGRICULTURE COUNSELOR  
TASHKENT FOR ESTH (PUTNAM)

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [EAGR](#) [ETRD](#) [PGOV](#) [KFLU](#) [TX](#)  
SUBJECT: AVIAN INFLUENZA: TURKMENISTAN NEUTRAL ON  
POULTRY IMPORTS

REFTEL: ASHGABAT 682 AND PREVIOUS

Sensitive But Unclassified; Not for Internet  
Distribution.

¶1. (U) ON JULY 3 THE EMBASSY RECEIVED A DIPLOMATIC NOTE FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA) IN RESPONSE TO THE EMBASSY'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION REGARDING THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKMENISTAN'S CURRENT RESTRICTIONS ON POULTRY IMPORTS. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY REPORTED THAT THE STATE EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SERVICE (SES) OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND MEDICAL INDUSTRY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CERTIFICATION OF POULTRY IMPORTS. HOWEVER, THE MINISTRY NOTED THAT "SES IS NOT ADDRESSING THIS ISSUE AT THE PRESENT TIME." ON JUNE 9, A LOCAL U.S. POULTRY IMPORTER, WHO REQUESTED AN IMPORT PERMIT, RECEIVED THE SAME NONCOMMittal ANSWER FROM SES CHIEF LEYLA SHAMURADOVA, WHO WROTE THAT "IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A STABLE ANTI-EPIDEMIC SITUATION IN TURKMENISTAN AND PREVENT INFECTIOUS DISEASES, THE MINISTRY WOULD NOT REVIEW AT THIS TIME ANY ISSUES RELATED TO THE CERTIFICATION OF POULTRY PRODUCTS TO BE IMPORTED INTO THE TERRITORY OF TURKMENISTAN."

¶2. (SBU) DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE STATE VETERINARY SERVICE HUDAIBERDY MUHAMMEDOV TOLD POLECON ASST ON JULY 7 THAT THE CURRENT IMPORT BAN WAS IMPOSED ONLY ON LIVE BIRDS AND EGGS FROM AVIAN INFLUENZA-INFECTED COUNTRIES, INCLUDING IRAN, TURKEY, KAZAKHSTAN, RUSSIA AND CHINA. Muhammedov said there is no restriction on U.S. chicken quarters; U.S. chicken quarters are available at Ashgabat food markets.

Comment

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¶3. (SBU) Embassy staff requested clarification of the July 3 diplomatic note from the MFA, but were told by Americas Desk officer Begench Garayev that the

"diplomatic note should be understood as it is written;" he did not offer a Rosetta stone for interpretation. The cryptic response is simply another example of government officials refusing to take responsibility for policy decisions they either make or enforce. The SES does not want to leave a paper trail that implicates the health ministry in allowing possibly tainted food into Turkmenistan nor a paper trail that blames the health ministry for insufficient quantities of meat available to consumers. End Comment.

JACOBSON